

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11593

FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, EG

SUBJECT: SODA ASH PLANT EXPANSION AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

REF: CAIRO 11046

1. IN NOV 12 CONVERSATION WITH UNDER SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION FOUAD ABDEL MEGUID, IN WHICH WE WERE REVIEWING FOREIGN INVESTMENT PROSPECTS FOR ALEXANDRIA, HE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE SURPRISE (BUT STRONG APPROVAL) THAT MISR CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES (A GOE "PUBLIC ORGANIZATION") HAD REQUESTED US BIDS ON DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT FOR DOUBLING CAPACITY OF ITS SODA ASH AND CAUSTIC SODA PLANT RECENTLY PUT INTO OPERATION WITH ROMANIAN ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL AID (REFTEL).

2. SEPARATELY WE WERE DISCUSSING RECENTLY APPOINTED LOCAL SECRETARY OF ARAB SOCIALIST UNION, ENG. DR. FAROUK GARAANA, SUCCESSOR TO ENG. ISSA SHAHEEN WHO WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF INDUSTRY IN LAST APRIL'S CABINET SHUFFLE. GARAANA'S DOCTORATE IS IN CHEMISTRY FROM VIENNA. ABDEL MEGUID NOTED THAT GARAANA HAD ALSO RECENTLY BEEN APPOINTED TO SUCCEED ENG SAID NOWETO AS MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MISR CHEMICALS.

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3. IT WAS ABDEL MEGUID WHO THEN WONDERED ABOUT POSSIBLE

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TWO EVENTS. CONGEN CAN ONLY NOTE
THAT SINCE HIS ASU APPOINTMENT, GARAANA HAS ON EVERY
OCCASION WE HAVE MET GONE OUT OF HIS WAY TO BE FRIENDLY
AND FORTHCOMING (AS WAS HIS PREDECESSOR SHAHEEN).
POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP OF MISR
CHEMICAL REQUEST TO ONGOING AND IMPROVING US-EGYPTIAN
RELATIONSHIPS SEEMS MORE LIKELY. SIGNED CHASE.
EILTS

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